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GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY STUDY

FUNCTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS




ROXBORO AND PERSON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY STUDY
FUNCTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

ROXBORO AND BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

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PREPARED FOR: ROXBORO-PERSON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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Special thanks are due to the Roxboro Area Chamber of Commerce and Henry N. Pleasant, Executive Vice President, who graciously made arrangements and provided facilities for committee meetings.

INTRODUCTION

Committee Task

The task of the Local Government Modernization Study Committee was to analyze existing governmental operations in Roxboro and Person County, with emphasis on the adequacy or inadequacy and costs of these services, and to recommend to city and county officials ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness of these services.

To look at each appropriate governmental function, the committee was organized into seven subcommittees - law enforcement, fire protection, water and sewer, solid waste disposal, recreation, planning and zoning, and organization, administration and finance. In June 1972 the committee decided that since the city and county were in the process of implementing a joint solid waste disposal facility and a countywide recreation program, these subcommittees should be disbanded with increased emphasis on the remaining five functional areas.

Study Approach

The procedure used to study each functional area was as follows. A preliminary study report was prepared by Division of Community Services staff members for each functional area. Each preliminary study outlined twelve areas of concern for the function; these were (1) unit of government now involved, (2) legal jurisdiction, (3) active or operational jurisdiction, (4) organization for policy making, (5) administrative organization, (6) level of staffing, (7) level of services, (8) level and purpose of expenditures, (9) source of finances, (10) relationship to other units or levels of government, and (12) evaluation of needs and assessment as to how well these are being met.

After this report was distributed, the appropriate subcommittee met to discuss the implications of the report, and to convey their opinions to staff members concerning the most important issues facing the city and county for that functional area.

An "alternatives" report was then prepared for each functional area, outlining several possible approaches for increasing efficiency and effectiveness for that function. Each alternative organizational concept was discussed in terms of four criteria: administration, financing, planning and policy making, and political responsibility. After each "alternatives" report was distributed, the full committee met to discuss the implications of each alternative. These discussions focused on feasibility, practicality, and general acceptability of each alternative, as well as the more theoretical advantages and disadvantages of each.

After each functional area had been studied and discussed as outlined above, each subcommittee met independently to choose what it felt was the best alternative proposed for that functional area. The full committee then met on January 12, 1973, to hear and consider the recommendations of each subcommittee, and to adopt and declare a full study committee recommendation for each function. That study committee recommendation will be discussed next.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Issues and Problems

A number of issues and problems were identified by the study committee in its examination of government service functions in Roxboro and Person County. Before going on to discuss these issues by functional area, it might be well to consider some basic definitions of governmental efficiency and effectiveness.

The difference between efficiency and effectiveness is subtle, but it is important. Efficiency basically means getting the best program possible within limited resources and/or capabilities. In other words, you could have a governmental administrative unit which was very efficient in terms of manpower utilization, record keeping, personnel management, etc., but still was unable to achieve its goals due to limiting factors such as inadequate budget, insufficient manpower, and archaic organizational structure. Effectiveness, on the other hand, is the measure of an organization's ability to achieve certain goals, the uppermost of which for a governmental agency would be to provide needed services to the people in its jurisdiction. A program can be effective without being efficient; i.e., it can provide results, but in a wasteful manner, or in turn, it can be efficient but not effective; i.e., it may have inadequate resources to do the job, but administrators do the best job possible under the circumstances.

A recurring theme in reports to the study committee has been that government services in Roxboro and Person County are often inadequate; however, this is not due to shortcomings of the personnel administering these programs (they generally do an

excellent job with their limited resources), but because they are not adequately staffed, funded, or organized to accomplish the objectives which need to be attained. For example, the Roxboro fire department cannot effectively serve all portions of the county because of geographic limitations (centralized location of equipment), but once they reach a fire their efficiency is readily apparent. An effective countywide fire fighting capability would probably cost more money (involving additional stations, equipment and men, or financial support of additional volunteer departments), however, this additional expenditure would not necessarily affect fire fighting efficiency one way or the other. Another example which readily comes to mind is the status of planning in the city and county. The zoning administrators do an efficient job considering all their duties as assistant city manager and tax collector, but it certainly isn't effective planning and zoning administration. There is no time for in-house long range planning, and little time for zoning and subdivision administration because of all the additional duties these men must perform.

With these general concepts of governmental efficiency and effectiveness in mind, the committee examined alternative solutions for problems identified in each functional area. In evaluating various alternatives, the committee used objective criteria suggested by the Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations. These criteria are as follows: *

- 1) Local jurisdictions should be of such size that providing any service will primarily be beneficial and chargeable to the residents of the jurisdiction. Similarly, the social costs of failing to provide a service should not be to the detriment of other jurisdictions.

*ACIR, Alternative Approaches to Governmental Reorganization in Metropolitan Areas, 1962, pp. 11-17.

- 2) Local governments should be of such size as to be able to secure economies of scale and thus be able to minimize the unit cost of services they provide.
- 3) Local governments should have a geographical area that will optimize the effective and efficient performance of a function.
- 4) Local governments should have sufficient geographical and legal jurisdiction to adequately cope with the problems that their citizens expect them to solve. This requires effective planning, full public debate and decision making, and necessary resources.
- 5) Local governments should be of such size as to reduce disparities among taxing units and thus facilitate the raising of adequate revenues on an equitable basis.
- 6) Local governments should be accessible to and controllable by the people.
- 7) Local governments should be organized as general purpose rather than single purpose units in order to properly balance total local needs and resources, and to achieve efficient administration through better coordination among functions and the reduction of overhead costs.
- 8) Local governments should be capable of adjusting government boundaries to meet changing social, economic, political, and demographic forces.
- 9) Functions should be assigned to the level of government that maximizes conditions and opportunities for active citizen participation and still permits adequate performance of services. This is another guarantee for keeping government sensitive to the citizens, as well as a way of assuring attraction of the community's best talent into positions of leadership.

The Recommended Alternative: City-County Consolidation

The alternatives examined for improving each function varied somewhat according to the subject matter at hand, however, those alternatives were generally city-county consolidation, inter-governmental agreements (joint agreements between city and county), extraterritorial powers, transfer of functions totally from one unit to the other, and creation of special districts. None of the alternatives is a panacea; each has certain advantages and disadvantages. However, each functional subcommittee recommended city-county consolidation as the best alternative solution for providing increased efficiency and effectiveness for that government service. Subsequent to the subcommittee reports and recommendations, the full study committee voted unanimously to recommend that Person County and the City of Roxboro proceed to form a charter commission for city-county consolidation. A report entitled "Consolidation: Roxboro-Person County, North Carolina" was prepared by the committee and presented to city and county officials at a meeting held March 15, 1973. That report, in addition to summarizing the committee's findings and recommendations, gave detailed information on actions necessary to proceed with a consolidation effort.

Subsequent to that recommendation being made, the county board of commissions requested that its state legislative delegation introduce a local act in the legislature authorizing Person County and the City of Roxboro to form a charter commission. Such an act was introduced and passed, and legal means are now available for the city and county to proceed with consolidation, should they so desire.

The remainder of this report will focus on alternative methods of improving services in each functional area studied. For ease of comparison, this will include some ideas on how each function might be administered and financed through a total city-county consolidation. These analyses are excerpts from preliminary surveys prepared for the study committee; for more detailed information, the reader is urged to refer to the preliminary surveys.

Alternative

Any discussion of altering the organizational structure of Person-County government, concerning law enforcement, must recognize that in North Carolina the sheriff is a constitutional officer. His office may not be abolished except by constitutional action of general application by the state legislature. However, some of his powers, duties and responsibilities may be abolished or transferred elsewhere by special legislation. A case in point is Guilford County where the sheriff's law enforcement responsibilities were transferred to a county police department in the 1920's.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS: FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Challenge

The City of Roxboro receives excellent protection from the city police department, however, county residents outside the city limits are getting less than adequate protection. The Person County Grand Jury has recommended improvements for the sheriff's department, including additional deputies and office space. The county commissioners have responded, in part, to the requests, but whether or not this will provide adequate countywide protection is questionable. Although the City of Roxboro has adequate police manpower, more effective records maintenance is needed.

Alternatives

Any discussion of altering the organization structure of Roxboro-Person County government, concerning law enforcement, must recognize that in North Carolina the sheriff is a constitutional officer. His office may not be abolished except by constitutional action of general application by the state legislature. However, some of his powers, duties and responsibilities may be diminished or transferred elsewhere by special legislation. A case in point is Mecklenburg County where the sheriff's law enforcement responsibilities were transferred to a county police department in the 1920's.

Aside from the sheriff's constitutional office, there are no legal obstacles to governmental restructuring in the area of law enforcement. In the event Roxboro-Person County should decide to consolidate governments, all of the law enforcement rights, powers, duties and responsibilities of both the city and the county would be vested in the consolidated government. Because of this, existing organizational arrangements (two departments) for the provision of law enforcement services could be continued or some new arrangement could be adopted. This is also true for the present state of separate city and county governments. Accordingly, the alternatives which can be considered include separate law enforcement agencies under separate governments, a consolidated agency under separate governments, and either of these under a consolidated government.

1. Separate Governments, Separate Law Enforcement Agencies

Under the present arrangement city and county law enforcement activities are financed from general fund appropriations. Thus, they are in the main dependent upon the property tax - a revenue source which is overburdened. Also, this method of finance creates an inequity for the city taxpayers who must support both city and county police departments but receive service from the city police only. This inequity will remain so long as the city and the county maintain separate police activities. The possibility of any large scale improvements of the quality of law enforcement is severely limited by the present system. The property tax is one of the most inelastic of revenue sources. Raising new funds for a particular service from this tax generally requires a real rate hike or transfer of funds from another service-alternatives which often are not

politically feasible. In conclusion, the city and county can continue to finance law enforcement activities at present service levels under the current dual agency arrangements with little difficulty. However, wholesale improvements in the quality of service are, for practical purposes, foreclosed so long as the present system and its financial limitations are continued.

Like financing, administration is a weakness of the present dual agency arrangement. The arrangement necessitates two separate law enforcement administrations where one could suffice at possible lower costs. Additionally, two purchasing systems, two capital plants, two communications systems, two clerical staffs increase the cost of services. Some of this burden could be alleviated by cooperative agreements between the sheriff and the city. Examination of budgets for the two agencies reveals a number of potential opportunities for cooperative purchasing, especially of high cost items like automobiles and equipment.

Planning and policy making for law enforcement are the responsibility of the sheriff and chief of police. The sheriff exercises a greater degree of autonomy than the chief, who must answer to the city manager. Even so, the chief has a great deal of independence in planning and setting policy for his department. The existence of two separate departments is not a great obstacle to planning and policy making. The city requires a more concentrated level of law enforcement services than the county and separation probably facilitates planning and policy making to these services. However, neither law enforcement agency can plan in a vacuum. The provision of urban and rural service is inter-related in this area as well as other areas of local government.

Separate operations are an impediment to the extent that cooperative planning and policy making are needed. This obstacle can be overcome within the framework of the present system by arrangements for cooperative planning and policy making for interrelated functions and operations of the two departments.

Lines of political responsibility are clear and under the present arrangement. City residents have recourse to the city police department through municipal elections and the sheriff is an elected official who must run for office countywide at regular intervals.

2. Separate Governments, Countywide Police Department

Under this alternative, a professional countywide police department would be established to serve the entire county, or if desired, to serve the unincorporated area of the county and perform specified services countywide. In the latter case, a small municipal police force would be maintained for parking operations and enforcement of codes and ordinances peculiar to the city. The arrangement would require legislative action limiting the sheriff's duties and responsibilities to serving process, service to the courts, and operating the county lockup. The power of appointment and the responsibility for the operation of the countywide police unit would be vested in the county commissioners. The legal jurisdiction of the department would be Person County in its entirety, including the corporate area of Roxboro.

Countywide support of a consolidated police agency would necessitate a basic change in the funding of necessary services provided by the county. The county would not derive enough funds from the property tax to meet the present combined expenditures of the city police and sheriff's department within the county 20¢ limitation on general fund appropriations. Moreover,

although moderate savings in administration could be realized by a countywide department, these would probably be offset by rising personnel costs. The sheriff would continue to require a staff and thus the total number of personnel in law enforcement would rise at the outset under a countywide department. Thus single rate taxation to support a countywide police department appears to be unrealistic.

Two alternatives to single rate countywide taxation for law enforcement might prove workable. The first would be the use of an urban service district concept whereby a tax differential would be applied to the Roxboro area in lieu of the concentrated police services required in the city. The second alternative would be contractual arrangements whereby the city contracted with the county for police services. The former of these alternatives would be better suited to a countywide police department under consolidated government and the latter to countywide police under separate governments.

Administration under this alternative would be simpler and more effective than the present dual arrangement. Economies of scale could be realized from the larger base of operations. Purchasing would be conducted on a higher volume basis. One communications system would replace two. Uniform police personnel qualifications and pay rates could be established countywide. Total clerical staff could probably be reduced. A uniform budgeting procedure would be implemented. Training could be conducted on a larger scale without impairing operational effectiveness. The list of administrative advantages to this approach is endless and constitutes the strongest argument for its implementation.

Planning and policy making would be simplified by the use of a countywide police department. The need for coordination of plans and policies of two departments would be eliminated. The result should be a more effective and uniform provision of services.

Political responsibility would not be appreciably compromised by the use of a countywide police department under powers vested in the county commissioners. However, a certain element of local control of police activities would be lost by the City of Roxboro. Countywide, the line of political responsibility for rural police activities would not be as well delineated due to the reduced powers of the sheriff, an elected official.

3. Law Enforcement Under A Consolidated Government

Organizational arrangements for law enforcement could take differing forms under a consolidated government. For example, the present arrangement could be maintained. An urban police department would then be responsible to the consolidated governing board in the same manner that it is now responsible to the city manager and city council. The sheriff would continue in the same relationship he now has to the county commissioners. The consolidated board would inherit all the powers, duties, and responsibilities for law enforcement now exercised by city council and the county commissioners.

If consolidation were selected and the present methods of providing law enforcement services were retained one option for financing could be used. The urban service district concept could be employed wherein city taxpayers paid the cost of the urban police department and county taxpayers paid the costs of the sheriff's operations. In this case, the cost to residents of the unincorporated area for law enforcement would rise by approximately 15¢ - the proportion of the sheriff's budget that city taxpayers now support through county taxes. As explained elsewhere in this report, a single countywide tax rate would not be feasible because of 20¢ limitation on general fund expenditures which would apply to the consolidated government. If a countywide police department were established under a consolidated government, the same financial regulations would apply. The urban service district concept could again be employed to defray the higher costs of law enforcement in the incorporated area. As in the above case, city taxpayers would not be charged the costs of rural police service, which is now the case.

Administration would not be greatly improved under consolidation if the present two law enforcement departments were maintained. Cooperative efforts could be more easily undertaken under consolidation, but the duplication of costs and services inherent in the present arrangement would continue. On the other hand, if a countywide police department were instituted under a consolidated government, the administrative benefits discussed in the previous section would be realized.

Planning and policy making should be enhanced under consolidation no matter what the form of organization for delivery of services. A single governing board would be in a better position to see law enforcement in the context of total government for the entire county. If two law enforcement units were retained cooperative planning and policy making would be better facilitated by a single governing board. If one department were created, a uniform planning program and uniform policy making procedures could be achieved.

There would be no difficulty in ascertaining lines of political responsibility for law enforcement under consolidation. If a countywide police department were created, one governing board would be entirely responsible. The loss of community control in the incorporated area might be offset by the creation of an urban service district citizens advisory board to advise the police department on matters concerning city law enforcement.

If the sheriff's department and city police were maintained under consolidation, there might be a certain amount of confusion to the voter. The sheriff would continue to be elected countywide but, as before, provide law enforcement services outside the city only. The city police department would then be responsible to a governing board which represented the entire county.

Recommendations

The law enforcement subcommittee recommends that total city-county consolidation be pursued as the best means of providing law enforcement services to the people of Roxboro-Person County.

FIRE PROTECTION

Should total consolidation not be pursued immediately, the subcommittee recommends that a countywide police force under a professional law enforcement officer be implemented. Primary considerations in recommending this alternative over maintenance of separate departments are: (1) more effective centralized administration, (2) possible cost savings through centralized personnel administration and purchasing, (3) ease in planning and policy making, and (4) flexibility in using resources where they are most needed at any point in time.

Alternatives

Concerning organizational arrangements for fire protection, there are essentially two alternatives: continue the present method of organization or replace the city department's rural services with volunteer fire departments. The form of government, whether it be the present city-county arrangement or a consolidated arrangement, would not greatly affect organization for fire protection.

1. Present Organization Under Existing Governmental Structures

Under the present arrangements for fire protection the lines of political responsibility are confused. County residents have no political recourse to the city fire department and yet contribute 30% of its annual operating budget.

FIRE PROTECTION

The Challenge

Fire protection is provided jointly by the city and county, with an annual appropriation by the county to the city. However, with only one centralized firefighting facility in the county (plus the Hurdle Mills Volunteer Fire Department, which serves only a small geographic area), the rural areas of the county are receiving virtually no fire protection. An extremely inequitable situation exists since county residents on the outer fringes (receiving virtually no protection) are paying the same share of their tax dollar for fire protection as those living just outside the city limits (who are receiving a high level of protection).

Alternatives

Concerning organizational arrangements for fire protection, there are essentially two alternatives: continue the present method of organization or replace the city department's rural services with volunteer fire departments. The form of government, whether it be the present city-county arrangement or a consolidated arrangement, would not greatly affect organization for fire protection.

1. Present Organization Under Existing Governmental Structures

Under the present arrangements for fire protection the lines of political responsibility are confused. County residents have no political resource to the city fire department and yet contribute 50% of its annual operating budget.

The city and county have the capacity to continue present levels of fire protection services. However, improving rural services to a level commensurate with the services now received in Hurdle Mills Community, through the Roxboro fire department, would require prohibitive costs. In addition, the present method of financing could create complex problems of equitably distributing costs between the city and the county taxpayers. At the present time city residents are paying a portion of the county contribution to the Roxboro fire department.

The present method of organization has several administrative advantages. Unity in budgeting and operating procedures is possible and the need for coordination is minimized. Training programs and personnel administration can be standardized. Centralized purchasing of fire equipment, uniforms and supplies by one department is available. These are advantages that might be forgone if alternatives were selected for providing fire services.

Both planning and policy making are enhanced by the existence of one fire department. Of course, a minimum of coordination is required between the Roxboro and Hurdle Mills department. These two functions would be complicated by the addition of other fire departments.

2. Expansion of Volunteer Fire Departments in Rural Areas

This is an alternative which could be implemented under the existing governmental structure in Roxboro-Person County, or under an alternative governmental structure. The arrangement might involve the county withdrawing some or all of its support of the Roxboro fire department, which in turn would provide primary service to only the incorporated area of Roxboro. Accordingly, fire districts and volunteer fire departments would have to be established throughout the county. County government would then give the financial support that it now gives to the Roxboro fire department to the volunteer departments.

The main financial difficulty with this approach would arise at the outset. Large outlays for capital and equipment would be necessary. Once initial outlays for overhead were made, operating costs should be manageable and county residents would probably receive a higher level of fire protection services for the cost of the current level of services. Savings would also be reflected through improved insurance ratings. The initial financial obstacles might be overcome through local fund raising events - the usual method of financing capital outlays for rural volunteer fire departments.

This approach would not offer the administrative advantages of a single fire department. However, many of the economic of centralization could be obtained through coordination - purchase of equipment and supplies, training programs, personnel standards, and communications systems. To this end the county might employ a fire administrator to coordinate the efforts of the volunteer fire departments, and possibly begin a fire inspection program.

Like administration, planning and policy making would be made difficult by the use of volunteer fire departments. To achieve the desired results a great deal of emphasis would have to be placed upon coordination. Ideally, plans and policies of the various volunteer fire groups should be coordinated in a manner which would preclude needless overlapping and duplication of functions and services.

This alternative would relieve the present gap in lines of political responsibility caused by the fact that county residents have no political recourse to the city fire department. Moreover, the institution of local volunteer departments would insure a measure of local control not now enjoyed.

3. Fire Protection Under A Consolidated Government

Either the present method of providing fire protection or the alternative of using rural volunteer fire department could be utilized by a consolidated government. However, regardless of the method of organization for fire protection that is employed, consolidated would have an impact upon the provision of the service.

If the existing arrangement were to be continued the Roxboro fire department, acting under a consolidated governing board, would serve the entire county (excepting Hurdle Mills where the present cooperative agreement with the city department would remain intact).

Financing fire protection from a consolidated government could be accomplished by single rate taxation. However, this would place an unfair burden on rural residents who would not receive as concentrated a level of services as urban residents. A more equitable means of finance might be the service district concept wherein rural and urban service districts were delineated and taxed commensurate with the level of services received.

Administratively, a countywide fire department under the aegis of a consolidated government is the most attractive alternative. The arrangement offers all the economics of centralization as well as uniformity in policy making, personnel administration, training, budgeting procedures and operating procedures.

Planning and policy making would be simplified by this alternative. Planning fire protection could be done from the perspective of the entire county, unhindered by artificial jurisdiction boundaries. The need for coordination would be minimized in that Hurdle Mills would have the only other operating department in the county. Implementation of plans and policies would be simplified by staff and management personnel having to deal with only one governing board rather than the present two boards.

Political responsibility would be improved by the institution of this alternative under a consolidated government. The same alternative used under separate governments, (the present arrangement) denies political recourse to the rural resident who has no voice in electing the governing board responsible for the fire department. With one governing board both city and county residents would have an opportunity to express themselves.

The use of volunteer fire departments under a consolidated government would involve limiting the service area of the Roxboro fire department to the urban area of the county and forming volunteer fire departments to serve the rural area. Administration, planning and policy making would function essentially the same as under separate governments, the chief difference in these areas being that administrators and policy makers would be responsible to one governing board. Political responsibility would be clear cut under this alternative. Only one governing board would be involved in the provision of fire protection services countywide. This relationship between the governing body and volunteer department would not be as direct as the relationship between the board and the paid urban department. However, this disadvantage to rural residents would be more than offset by the degree of local control they would exercise in their respective volunteer department.

Recommendation

The fire protection subcommittee recommends that total city-county consolidation be pursued as the best means of providing fire protection services to the people of Roxboro-Person County.

Should total consolidation not be pursued immediately, the subcommittee recommends that at least three additional volunteer fire departments be formed to help meet fire protection needs in outlying rural areas of the county. County commissioners should meet with community leaders from Surl, Bethel Hill, Woodsdale, Cunningham, Timberlake, and other rural communities, to determine if there is local interest for establishing additional departments similar to that in Hurdle Mills. Assistance in exploring the feasibility of such ventures can be obtained from the following sources:

North Carolina Department of Insurance
Fire and Rescue Division - Labor Building
108 West Edenton Street
Raleigh, N.C. 27611
829-3901

Fire Insurance Rating Bureau
226 South Dawson Street
Raleigh, N.C. 27601
834-4313

WATER AND SEWER

The Challenge

Counties have considerable flexibility in financing water and sewer facilities, however, in Person County this function is handled entirely by the city. This has several implications in addition to the smaller tax base available to the city for financing improvements to the system. Much of the growth in Person County is occurring outside the Roxboro city limits, yet the people living outside the city who need water and sewer services have no voice in policies governing their extension. Thus, some people who need these services do not receive them. Also, policies governing extensions of water and sewer facilities are an extremely important tool for guiding growth and development. The city can therefore dictate where growth in the county will or will not occur, with no recourse through the county commissioners for noncity residents.

In a recent questionnaire distributed by the Roxboro Area Chamber of Commerce, Person County residents listed inadequate water supply as the number one problem facing the community. Roxboro is currently applying for federal funds to augment its water supply, as well as for upgrading portions of its sewage disposal system, but should this application be denied, the city may face another water shortage crisis this summer.

Alternatives

1. City of Roxboro Responsible For Water And Sewer

This alternative is essentially the continuation of the present arrangement, whereby the City of Roxboro is the sole authority responsible for the provision of water and sewer utilities in Person County. Whether any changes in the physical

facilities or operation of the utilities would be implemented would be entirely a city decision, and any changes (extensions, etc.) would be the city's responsibility. If the water and sewer utilities are to be extended to serve any or all of the unincorporated areas of Person County, this would be a city undertaking under this arrangement.

Under this alternative, the city is responsible for the financing of any expenses necessary to the utility operations. If we are talking about utility services provided only within the corporate limits of the city, this would pose no logical problems. City residents only would benefit from the services, and there would be no reason why anybody outside the city would have to participate. However, when we consider extrajurisdictional extensions of services - and this appears to be a major problem to be faced - we run into problems of financing and equitable distributions of costs. Many people outside the city limits need these services, yet expansion of the system as received is difficult because of debt limitations for general obligation financing. The city simply doesn't have the necessary tax base for required expansion of the system.

Another important consideration of this alternative is planning and policy making. The ability to provide water and sewer services to various areas is a major tool - if not the primary tool - for planning and directing the physical development of an area which is available to local government in that area. Therefore, a determination as to where water and sewer will be made available (and whether it will be made available) is made based upon major planning and policy making considerations.

Major development, residential or industrial, takes place where these utilities are made available. Prior to the determination as to extension of these utilities, major policy decisions must be made as development plans and goals. The impact on the area's development has to be considered. In fact, development objectives should be the key criteria upon which utility extension decisions are to be based. Consequently, other development policy and planning tools should be used in connection with decisions regarding utility provision. These include long range land use development plans, zoning and subdivision regulations, and the like.

The city has the authority to exercise these devices within its corporate limits, and with a one mile perimeter around the city. Presumably, in making decisions regarding utility services within this area, the city is effectively utilizing these planning and development tools, thus directing the development impact of utility service to its fullest advantage. The problem in this regard arises when we consider the possibility of the city extensively providing water and sewer utility extensions beyond its planning and zoning jurisdictional limits. The city's utility extension efforts and the county's planning and regulatory efforts and capabilities must be effectively coordinated to bring about desirable development results. If the city's utility extensions and the county's planning and regulation policies don't dovetail perfectly, the results will likely be wasteful and ineffective.

Political responsibility, too, should be considered. So far as utility work within the City of Roxboro undertaken by the city is concerned, there is answerability, and no problem is involved. Affected city residents have recourse to the city council, the elected representatives

who make the decisions regarding utility undertakings. When the city undertakes work outside of its corporate boundaries, however, we encounter problems. These utilities affect county residents naturally - though assessment charges, use charges, water rates, etc. - but the city council which makes the policy here is not answerable to these residents. County residents can appeal to their board of commissioners, but since the county board has no direct say in the city's utility undertakings - even when they extend into the county - the residents have no effective voice.

2. County Undertaking A Utilities Program.

The county could become involved in the utilities business in a number of ways, including city-county joint investments, a countywide county-operated system, or a separate county system. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of each will now be discussed.

Under a city-county joint investment, the city would continue to have primary responsibility and control over the utilities systems, but the county would provide assistance in extending lines off the city system to serve the county areas.

There are three basic ways in financing these services where county governments have worked with cities to extend water and sewerage services. First, the county pays part of the cost of the extension outside the city. The city owns the lines and is completely responsible for their operation. The second way is basically the same as the first, except that ownership of the lines remains with the county. In these cases, all or part of the cost of the extension was paid for by the county. The lines are then leased to the city for a small sum which is enough to pay for the operation and maintenance of the water and sewerage

lines. Under the third method, the county is paid back, in whole or in part, from fees and charges from the sale of the services. The city is responsible for the operation and maintenance, but agrees to give part of the money it collects in rates and charges back to the county.

A system by which the county would undertake the extension of utility lines from the city system to serve county areas is probably the most feasible from an economic standpoint - at least in terms of short range economic impact. Counties have available to them a wide range of authority to finance such undertakings. Counties may apply property tax funds, levy special assessments, impose use changes, connection fees, etc. City-County agreements and policies may be developed regarding sharing or apportionment of construction costs, maintenance, etc., and thus many obstacles imposed by limited financial resources of one unit or other may be overcome by mutual arrangements.

The problems here are twofold. The first, of course, is the problem of coming up with an equitable formula for apportionment of costs acceptable to both governments. The second involves the statutory debt limitations of the city and consequently its ability to obtain debt financing necessary for extensive plant expansion. If the combined debt limitation margins of both city and county could be utilized to overcome the city debt ceiling problem, this could be a solution (i.e. the county issuing obligations and borrowing to pay its proportionate share). However, it is questionable whether the county might legally be able to borrow to finance construction of city owned and operated plants.

Planning and policy making would continue to be a divided function. That is, the city would continue to plan and make policy relating to utility service in the incorporated area, while the county would play this role in the unincorporated areas. There would be, however, a number of interrelated planning and policy matters which would require the close cooperations and coordination between city and county in this type of joint endeavor. City and county elected officials and planning boards would have to work together. Plans and policies must dovetail. Again, a joint city-county planning board may help here. But since the problems go beyond purely planning and involve policy-making (city council and board of commissioners roles), some device to insure joint policy decision making regarding utilities by both units should be considered.

In terms of political responsibility, in this type of arrangement city elected representatives would be responsible for the city's utility systems and county representatives would be responsible for the line extension program. It is in the area of those overlapping aspects of policy-making inherent in this arrangement, as mentioned earlier, that problems of direct representation exist. It would seem that the city way to overcome this would be to establish some device which would facilitate joint participation in related policy decision-making between county and city boards. Through such an arrangement, county residents could be assured that their interests and views would be considered by the city in reaching policy decisions which would affect them (water rates, for example)

Under a countywide, county-operated system, the county would essentially take over the water and sewer utilities, providing services in any (or all) areas of the county, including the city. The City of Roxboro would relinquish its control and the operation of the present system to the county. There may be variations to this idea, such as the city retaining responsibility for water distribution within the city or retaining control over sewer lines within its limits, but the theme here is primarily a county take-over of the operation.

So far as legal authority for the county to finance the various aspects of such a system, no real problem is apparent. The counties generally have as wide a range of legal authority in this field as do the cities. Were the county to take over the city systems, this would also be legally permissible. In short, no real legal obstacles to this approach are apparent from the standpoint of finances. Minor legal impediments, if they were to present themselves, could presumably be overcome through local legislation through the next session of the General Assembly.

A complete assumption of water and sewer utilities by the county would require a major capital financial outlay by the county. This outlay would be required for any expansions of the present city system in developing a countywide service, as well as for acquisition of the city facilities. The latter would constitute the largest initial outlay, requiring the assumption by the county of the present outstanding debt applicable to the city utility systems, and the payment of accruing interest and principal payments. The financial advantage to this alternative is the broader range of fiscal resources available to the county. In comparison to the city, the county has a much larger

property tax base, and the county's larger assessed valuation would presumably allow it a much higher debt limitation. Of course, the county would be getting the utility system's operating revenues which are now going to the city.

Were this approach used, all planning and policy-making functions - those presently undertaken by the county but on a larger scale - would be assumed by the county. Since one governmental unit would have all planning and policy authority under this plan, it offers a decided advantage over the joint venture arrangements. One problem in this area is the fact that the county would have to start from scratch in developing the capability to undertake an effective planning and policy-making role necessary for a large scale utility undertaking. This would require some limited staffing, as well as acquiring the experience, expertise and know-how in the utilities field, a new field for Person County officials. The most logical and sensible way to effect the changeover would be to transfer the entire utilities organization of the city to the county - staff, equipment, everything.

In terms of pure logic and theory, the focusing of political responsibility in one unit of government is one of the main attributes of the countywide approach. The utilities system would benefit and affect all Person County residents. It would be under the control and responsibility of the board of county commissioners, who in turn represent all county residents - city and noncity. As relates to utilities, all county residents would be represented by officials elected by them who run the show.

If separate city and county systems were used, the city would retain its present system but limit its extent to service within the city boundaries. The county would establish its own completely separate sewer and water systems - completely self-operational - to serve all county areas outside the city.

It is felt that it would be wise to summarily dismiss this idea without going into extensive further discussion. Person County has only one incorporated municipality at present, and the city operates the only utility system. The county would have to start from scratch, and essentially duplicate all the administrative services provided by the city. This would be counter-productive, both in the short run and over an extended period of time.

3. Separate Authority To Provide Water and/or Sewer

There is legal authority in North Carolina for the establishment of various types of agencies, authorities, districts, etc., which can be responsible for providing water or sewer utilities, or both. Details of the various alternatives provided for in the statutes will not be explored since it is felt that this approach would be wholly impractical in Person County, and any advantages would be greatly outweighed by the disadvantages.

The substance of most of these devices is a separate governmental authority to provide the utility services to a given area. This might serve presently unserved areas or may provide service to an area already serviced by one or more cities, counties or other jurisdictions. The reason why such a device is unsuitable for Roxboro-Person County is basically that it would create a new, additional level of government where existing government (the city, the county, or some combination of the two) should be capable of doing the job. Such an additional government may be ideal where no government exists, or

where several exist but are unable to coordinate their efforts effectively, however, this is not the case in Person County. Another level of government would create problems of inter-governmental cooperation. It would certainly bring about costly duplication in at least some areas. Since such an authority would not likely attract the degree of public attention or involvement present governments do, it would dilute representation and have less responsiveness to public interests. It would further tax already limited financial resources, and probably would be unable to find enough money to adequately do the job for which it was created.

The advantage in Person County is governmental simplicity; the fact that there are but two units of local government, both of which are directly responsible to the people they represent. Resources of these units should be used to best advantage in seeking solutions to water and sewer problems, without getting involved in creating additional units.

4. Water And Sewer Under A Consolidated Government

The unified government concept would offer the greatest level of financial capacity for providing utility services of any of the alternatives considered. Presumably, the new government would be able to exercise collectively all of the fiscal powers and authority of both existing units of government (city and county). It would possess the full range of financial devices appropriate to water and sewer utilities (special assessments, use charges, connection fees, water sale, etc.), which can be exercised countywide. In terms of property tax base, all taxable property in the county would come within the taxing power. Also, the tax rate limitation would probably be more

liberal for this type of government. Logically, since it will supplant city and county taxing authority, the new government should be allowed a tax rate limitation at least as high as the combined present limits of city and county.

The question of debt limitations must be considered, and here again the unified government concept would seem to have the greatest advantage. Following the same logic applicable to tax rate limitation (above), it would seem that the new government would be allowed a debt limitation ceiling at least as high as the combined limitation presently imposed upon the city and county. This would give it as great a capability of any alternative considered for financing extensive, countywide utilities undertakings through borrowing and long term debt financing. The new government would assume all present debt obligations of both the present city and county governments. This would include the present city indebtedness applicable to the city operated existing utility system.

Most of the possible problems of "double taxation" which might arise under some other alternatives would be avoided through a unified government. The new government would be the sole local taxing authority. While it would uniformly tax all residents and property throughout the county, it would also be the sole unit responsible for providing service, as uniformly as possible, to all county people.

Unified government presents the greatest advantages over the alternatives in terms of planning and policy making. Under the unified concept, one unit would be charged with planning for the entire area of Person County, and one body will be the policy maker for the whole area. With regard to the many important

planning and policy considerations involved with utility system undertakings, the same unit of government would be responsible for these matters as that responsible for all utility system operations. This type of approach would eliminate all of the coordination and cooperation problems which were noted earlier in connection with other alternatives. One unit of government responsible for physical aspects of the utilities would not have to depend on a separate, autonomous unit for the necessary planning and policy matters. Nor would two separate and autonomous units be charged with making plans or policy relating to the same basic thing - a utility system.

The same that was said for planning and policy making can be said for administration under a unified concept. The unit responsible for the countywide utilities system would have the job of tending to all the administrative details. The coordination and duplication problems inherent in a multi-unit arrangement - where two units are involved in aspects of the same basic activity - would be eliminated by a single responsible unit. The new unified government, of course, would take on the entire utilities organization and operation now under the city government. The present organization and its resources would be the basic nucleus which the new unit would expand and build on as the needs of the future utilities activities would dictate.

Unified government would seem to offer the purest and simplest solution to the problem of direct answerability to all people affected by the utilities system. The unified government would have one governing body directly responsible to all people in the county, and directly elected by all people in the county. That same body would have full responsibility for the entire water and sewer utility system which will ultimately serve all people in the county. Those major matters which may be subject to referendum approval (election) will be voted on by all county voters.

Recommendation

The water and sewer subcommittee recommends that total city-county consolidation be pursued as the best means of providing water and sewer services to the people of Roxboro-Person County.

Should total consolidation not be pursued immediately, the subcommittee recommends that the county take over the water and sewer system, make extensions, increase the water supply, make all other capital improvements, and handle all bond issues. The city should operate and maintain the system, and administer billing and collections. The system should be self supporting; only those using water and sewer facilities should pay for them.

Assistance in implementing this recommendation can likely be obtained from the Institute of Government in Chapel Hill.

PLANNING AND ZONING

The Challenge

Person County and the City of Roxboro both have active planning boards, however, they have not been particularly effective in managing and guiding growth and development. This ineffectiveness is due primarily to shortcomings in organization, coordination, and operational jurisdictions. Again, the primary issue is the location of most new growth, i.e., outside Roxboro's city limits.

Within a distance of one mile outside Roxboro's city limits (its extraterritorial jurisdiction), the city exercises subdivision controls and policies governing extensions of utilities; in the same geographic area, the county exercises zoning jurisdiction and electrical inspection - there is no building inspection. Thus, we have two separate governing bodies, reflecting two sets of growth and development policies, operating within the same geographic area. In all fairness, it should be stated that the county is considering adopting a building code and subdivision regulations, however, coordination between the city and county would still be lacking. There is little long range planning done at either the city or county level, and there are no clearly defined policies for growth and development. Lack of enforcement of existing ordinances, due to inadequate manpower, is also recognized as a problem.

Alternatives

1. Maintaining Separate Planning Boards

Under this alternative, the basic structure of the separate boards as they now exist would be maintained, but a number of administrative changes could be made to help solve some of the problems inherent with separate boards.

The current administrative structure of the city and county planning boards is governed by general statute, charter and ordinance, and bylaws of the boards themselves. Since the general statutes give the city and county considerable leeway for internal organization of their planning boards, the creation of viable boards rests in the hands of local government officials.

Since the functions of the county planning board have been primarily the drafting and enforcement of zoning ordinances, the administration of the zoning ordinances is most important for consideration. When the county zoning ordinances now in effect were first adopted, they were enforced by the city zoning administrator, however these duties were subsequently assigned to a county administrator as an additional part-time job. Zoning ordinances are fairly complex, and it is difficult for any person to enforce them on a part-time basis, particularly if the administrator has had no previous training in this area. The situation for the City of Roxboro is similar. The zoning administrator is also the building inspector and assistant city manager, and it seems that not very much time can be devoted to enforcement of the zoning ordinance.

The City of Roxboro also has considerable flexibility in determining how its planning functions are to be administered. The manner of appointment and terms of office of board members are stated in the city charter, and the internal administrative matters are found in the board's bylaws.

In terms of revamping the planning administrative structure if the city and county decide to retain separate planning boards, it seems that many of the problems associated with two part-time planning and zoning administrators could be solved with one full-time employee working for both the city and county boards. A single building inspector and zoning administrator could be trained in planning principles and techniques at the UNC Institute of Government and act as a planning staff member for the county and city. This individual could either be hired jointly by the city and county, or hired by one of the governing bodies and, according to written agreement, serve as an inspector for the other government for a specified number of hours or days per week.

If separate planning boards for the city and county are retained, policy making will be essentially unchanged from the present system. Policy making which relates to physical planning is primarily the function of the city council and the board of county commissioners, with the advice and assistance of their respective planning boards. Since each governmental unit would retain its policy making powers over its jurisdictional area, hopefully the overlap in jurisdiction concerning land use regulations outside of Roxboro could be made more consistent. The present overlap in subdivision regulations and zoning means that, ultimately, there is an overlap in land use policy making for that geographic area. This could be alleviated even if the present separate boards are retained if Roxboro were to exercise its extraterritorial zoning and building inspection powers outside the city limits.

2. Establishment Of A Joint Planning Board

Considerable latitude is granted by the General Statutes in the organization and administration of joint planning boards. Although some of the existing joint planning boards in North Carolina are organized under special acts of the legislature, others, such as the Charlotte-Mecklenburg board, are organized by virtue of a simple agreement between themselves as allowed by General Statute.

The General Statutes do not specify the type of staff to be provided for a joint planning board, but they do authorize provision of either a full-time, part-time, or consultant staff. Any officers or employees of the joint board can be appointed jointly, or they can be appointed by one governmental unit and their services contracted for by the other unit.

Although the substance of an agreement between two governing bodies to create a joint planning board is discretionary, the agreement must contain certain enumerated items of substance. Section 160A-464 of the General Statutes provides that any contract or agreement establishing (a joint) undertaking shall specify:

- 1) The purpose or purposes of the contract or agreement;
- 2) The duration of the agreement;
- 3) If a joint agency is established, its composition, organization, and nature, together with the powers conferred on it;
- 4) The manner of appointing personnel necessary to the execution of the undertaking;
- 5) The method of financing the undertaking, including the apportionment of costs and revenues;
- 6) The formula for ownership of real property involved in the undertaking, and procedures for disposition of such property when the contract or agreement expires or is terminated;

- 7) Methods for amending the contract or agreement;
- 8) Methods for terminating the contract or agreement;
- 9) Any other necessary or proper matter.

The adoption of an agreement fulfilling these requirements should not be a problem for Roxboro and Person County, should they desire a joint planning board.

Policy making for a joint planning board would remain in the hands of the city and county governing boards. The joint board would make recommendations to both the county commissioners and the city council if this were the procedure called for in the joint agreement, which in all likelihood would be the procedure adopted. The city council would maintain and formulate policies in conjunction with land use controls in the city limits and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (presuming, of course, that its zoning ordinance and building code are by ordinance extended to cover its extraterritorial jurisdiction). The county commissioners would do likewise for the remainder of the county. The joint planning board would act as a coordinating body between these two government policy making units.

Political responsibility with a joint planning board would rest with the board of commissioners and city council, just as it does now with individual planning boards. The city would be responsible for planning and zoning in the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction, and the county would retain political responsibility for these functions in the remainder of its geographic area.

3. Planning And Zoning Under A Consolidated Government

The administrative structure of planning and zoning under a unified government would essentially be whatever the charter commission suggested, and the voters approved, subject to passage

of a special local act by the state legislature. Thus, the composition, duties and functions of a planning board under a unified government would not be subject to provisions of existing planning enabling legislation except, perhaps, if all these items were not covered in the written charter.

The charter commission would have to consider a number of questions in relation to the composition and duties of the planning board under the unified government. These would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1) How many members should be selected for the board, from what geographic areas should they be chosen, and what term of office should they serve;
- 2) What powers should the board possess in relation to hiring and removing staff members;
- 3) What procedures should be used for public hearings and making recommendations to the unified governing body;
- 4) How can a wider range of the community's collective knowledge and experience be utilized in formulating community goals and priorities, which can then be transformed into planning policies;
- 5) Should the advisory function of the planning board be expanded to cover all actions of the governing body relating to physical development of the community, and should these be expanded still further to include social and economic matters;
- 6) How should the planning board relate to the various commissions which have more or less independent powers over functions which affect the environment, including the housing authority, parks and recreation commission, and similar groups;
- 7) Should the planning board be given more responsibility for plan implementation, possibly through a merger with one or more existing boards or departments;

- 8) Should the current plan implementation functions of the planning boards (zoning and subdivision regulations) be transferred to other agencies, leaving it full-time responsibility for fact-gathering, goal formulation, plan-making, and advisory functions?

Depending on the depth to which a charter commission may want to explore these and other questions, the structure and duties of a planning board under a unified government could be greatly expanded or changed, or they could closely follow the current structure of the Roxboro and Person County boards.

Recommendation

The planning and zoning subcommittee recommends that total city-county consolidation be pursued as the best means of providing this service to the people of Roxboro-Person County.

Should total consolidation not be pursued immediately, the subcommittee recommends that the city and county appoint a joint planning board to consider growth and development matters in both the city and county. This joint board should be assisted by a single administrator who is familiar with both city and county land use regulatory measures. Also, the subcommittee recommends that the city update its zoning ordinance so that it will be compatible administratively with the proposed county ordinance now being considered.

ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The Challenge

Counties in North Carolina (and Person County, is no exception) are having to provide more municipal-type services such as recreation and fire protection because people, even in rural areas, are expecting them. Other services, including more efficient solid waste disposal and more sophisticated financial management, are becoming mandatory through requirements of other levels of government, particularly the state. Thus, county governments which were organized to meet the needs of agrarian based rural constituents (as well as the "social needs" of urban and rural residents) have become ill-equipped to handle more complex administrative and managerial tasks.

Such is the situation in Person County today. The county is continuing to provide new services (recreation, zoning, land-fill operations), but it has no professional administrative and managerial capability for coordinating these services. The commissioners are saddled with the onerous tasks of administering the day-to-day activities of county government when their valuable time should be spent on making major policy decisions.

Another deficiency, at both the city and county level, is the lack of a uniform purchasing system. Each department head is allowed to purchase as he sees fit within budget constraints. Substantial savings could materialize from a purchase order system and volume purchases of common-use supplies, to possibly include school supplies.

Alternatives

1. Maintaining The Existing Organization, Administration And Finance Structure

This is not a very realistic alternative since it is obvious that Roxboro and Person County have not been satisfied with the status quo in the past; progressive measures have been taken whenever elected officials have seen the need to provide additional services for a price people were willing to pay. The organization, administration and finance functions in city and county government have evolved from experiences and lessons learned as community needs have become more complex. These changes are not always voluntary; they are frequently in response to a requirement from another governmental agency, either at the state or federal level. An example of such a change was the recent authorization by the Person County Commissioners for the county accountant to begin setting up the Uniform Local Government Accounting System.

Therefore, the real question before committee members is not whether Roxboro and Person County will retain the status quo administratively - they have not in the past, and will not do so in the future - but whether these changes should be evolutionary in response to particular problems, or whether they should be more comprehensive in anticipation of future needs and requirements. Since Roxboro and Person County are not expected to grow very rapidly, these needs will be focused primarily on improving the quality of life for long-time area

residents. This will include better housing, better recreational facilities, cleaner streams, and additional employment opportunities, among others. A factor which should be kept in mind is that, even though the absolute population of Roxboro and Person County will probably not increase dramatically, important shifts are taking place in terms of population distribution. While the rural townships are losing people, Roxboro Township outside the city limits is growing. This creates an evergrowing need for municipal services for nonmunicipal residents - a situation that requires more interlocal cooperation between city and county, or else some basic and pervasive organizational changes.

2. Reorganizing Specific Functions Through Interlocal Agreements

Interlocal or intergovernmental agreements have proven to be one of the better alternatives for government reorganization since they are politically feasible and usually easily implemented. In the broad category of organization, administration and finance, there appear to be two specific functional areas where interlocal agreements between Roxboro and Person County would lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness; these functional areas are general administrative services and financial administration.

At the present time, there are significant differences between administrative services in Roxboro and Person County. In the case of Roxboro we find a fairly sophisticated administrative organization with a full-time city manager and assistant city manager to implement policies of the city council through other staff and line departments. Person County, on the other hand, administers all programs, boards, commissions and departments directly through the Board of Commissioners, who are public

spirited elected officials, but who have other full-time occupations and professions. The question of whether or not the county needs a full-time administrator at this time may be debated, but the trend of counties assuming additional municipal-type functions clearly indicates that a professional administrator will be needed in the not too distant future, if indeed one is not already needed. The recent creation of a recreation department in the county, plus the need to develop solid waste disposal, planning, fire protection, and water/sewer facilities and capabilities all point out the need for a full-time administrative capability to coordinate and direct these and other existing functions.

A professional administrator is needed, not only as an "overseer" of other public employees, but to perform other more important management functions. Among these functions are: establishing internal organizational structures, planning for implementation of new programs and services, reorganizing existing services and operations for greater efficiency, scheduling the use of equipment and material, establishing records systems for control and reporting, organizing employee training programs, preparing studies and reports for elected officials, preparing budgets, and evaluating the cost and effectiveness of alternative program approaches. These are all directed at his primary task of implementing policies of the elected officials in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Although separate governmental units do not usually "share" administrative managers, the possibility of doing so in Roxboro and Person County should not be discounted. In fact, an agreement of this type could encompass joint use of office space and joint reproduction of records, as well as other administrative functions such as personnel administration.

The most likely method of sharing administrative services among the city and county would be on a contractual basis, or by transferring the function to the broader-based county government, or some combination of these two. On a contract basis, the administrator and his immediate staff could be officially employed by either governmental unit, with his administrative services contracted for by the other unit. If the administrator were transferred to the county level, his services could be contracted for by the city or, more informally, the city could simply contribute to the cost of his administrative services. If separate governing units were to be maintained, it would seem to be much more feasible to have the professional administrator at the county level since he would be providing a countywide service as an employee of either unit. Also, many of the urban growth problems associated with Roxboro-Person County are occurring just outside the city limits and their solutions need the attention of county government; an administrator at the county level would probably be better able to focus on these problems.

The advantage of such an arrangement would be centralized coordination of solutions to problems common to both the city and county. This is not an unimportant consideration. It is obvious that additional services, will have to be provided by the county as well as the city, either because the people in the county are going to demand them or because some state or federal agency is going to require it. The decisions on how to best provide these services on a day-to-day basis are best left to a professional government administrator or manager; this will not take the "politics" out of government, since the elected officials would still determine basic policies to be carried out by the professional administrator.

A single administrative staff for the city and county would, at least initially, cost more than the current structure simply because another function (administration) would be added to county expenditures. If the existing city administrative staff were used it would probably have to be augmented in some way, perhaps with an assistant "manager" for city affairs and an assistant for county affairs or perhaps an assistant for personnel administration.

Under this type of joint administrative structure policies for municipal functions and for countywide functions would continue to be made by the city council and county commissioners, respectively. The advantage of this arrangement would be that the administrator, in carrying out these two sets of policies, would readily be able to determine if they were conflicting or duplicating in terms of providing services to the same group of people. This would be particularly true in regard to policies affecting residents of Roxboro's one mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. For example, the administrator would be able to determine if provisions in the city's subdivision regulations were contradictory to those in the county's zoning ordinance, both of which are enforced for the same geographic area outside the city. He could then suggest amending one of the ordinances to ensure their compatibility.

The disadvantage of this arrangement, and it is a critical shortcoming, is that a single administrator may find it difficult or impossible to "serve two masters." Regardless of the structure of the joint administrative agreement, the administrator would still have two "bosses" whose interests may at times be antagonistic. It may, in fact, be difficult to find any professional administrator to take a job such as this when there is such a good chance that he would bear the brunt of conflicts between the two units.

Political responsibilities under this arrangement would be essentially the same as they are currently. City council members would be responsible for any actions taken by the administrative staff in regard to municipal affairs, and the same would be true for the county commissioners. One advantage of this structure would be that citizens could go to a single source to determine which governmental unit and department is responsible for providing a service or solving a particular problem. There may be some loss of the elected officials dealing directly with their constituents, but the citizens would always have recourse to go directly to the elected officials if they were dissatisfied with an action taken by the administrator. Also, by the administrator directing day-to-day government operations, it would give elected officials much more time to determine community goals, priorities, and policies, which should be their primary function. The administrator can, in turn, give the elected officials much more data and background for the formulation of major policies than they can now gather on their own. This is one of the primary reasons for using professional administrators to increase effectiveness of government services.

Financial administration in a local unit of government has two major objectives: the first is to control the utilization of fiscal resources, and the second is to maximize the public services provided with those resources. The first of these objectives, the control of financial resources, usually is not much of a problem since the techniques used have been refined to the extent that they follow generally accepted government accounting principles. In North Carolina, particularly, these procedures must conform to requirements in the County Fiscal Control Act or the Municipal Fiscal Control Act. After July 1, 1973, however, both cities and

counties will have to conform to the new Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act. Provisions in this new act could make local control of financial resources somewhat more complex, although ultimately they should lead to more efficient and effective local government accounting procedures.

The second objective of financial administration, its use as a management tool to maximize public service efficiency, is not as frequently attained as is the first objective of fiscal control, the reason being that it takes a fairly sophisticated financial administrator, working very closely with the general administrative manager, to accomplish such an objective. This, of course, is impossible in Person County since there is no general administrator or financial administrator. It would be difficult to accomplish this objective in Roxboro since responsibilities for financial administration are divided between several people (treasurer, accountant, clerk), although they all are under the general supervision of the city manager.

The most feasible types of structures would likely be the transfer of the entire financial administration function to one governmental unit (probably the county, but only if there were to be a full-time manager for the county), or to enter into joint agreements for subfunctions of financial administration, such as purchasing, tax collection, program budgeting, etc.

If the entire function were to be handled by one governmental unit, either through a service contract or some other arrangement, there would have to be a very strong coordinative tie to the other unit for both practical and legal reasons. This coordination would probably be through a county manager to the city manager, and through them to the county commissioners

and city council. This coordination takes on legal significance also, because after July 1, 1973, each local unit of government and public authority must appoint a budget officer and a finance officer. These officers have certain responsibilities and duties under the statutes, and these positions would probably have to be maintained separately. In a city or county having a manager, the manager must be the budget officer; the finance officer can be any appointed official. Whether both units could jointly appoint a finance officer is questionable. Since the statutory requirements for financial administration are quite complex, the feasibility of combining the entire function may be tenuous. This is particularly true since any such agreement would have to be subject to termination so that it would not bind successor governing bodies. Termination of a complex organization such as a fully integrated finance department might be administratively cumbersome to both units.

It would be more feasible, perhaps, to consider joint agreements for selected financial administrative functions. Tax collecting and purchasing would administratively lend themselves well to joint agreements between city and county. It would be a simple matter to transfer that tax collecting function now handled by the city over to the county; this proposal has already been discussed by city and county officials. To administer a joint purchasing function would be only slightly more complex. At the present time neither the city or county have centralized purchasing. An existing employee for either unit could be designated "purchasing agent" and could act in this capacity for both units. A purchase order system could be incorporated as part of an encumbrance accounting procedure, both of which are

a part of the new Uniform Accounting System which will undoubtedly be adopted by both units within the next few years. Common use items, such as office materials, would then be agreed upon by city and county, and these items could be ordered in amounts to effectuate volume savings. Hopefully, this system could also involve the school system, which is a large volume purchaser of common use supplies.

There are several reasons why some form of financial administration reorganization could result in savings for Roxboro and Person County taxpayers: (1) centralized grant management through a finance director would enhance the ability to get outside sources of funds, particularly federal funds, (2) lower administrative overhead would result from joint use of personnel, office space, and expensive equipment such as accounting machines, (3) joint purchasing of common use items would effectuate volume savings, and (4) centralized treasury management would help increase income from idle fund investments.

Stronger financial administration would also aid as a policy-making and planning tool of elected officials at both levels of government. This would be true of long range as well as short range planning and policy-making. Sophisticated financial administration would include capital improvements program budgeting for both units, projected for the next five to seven years. This can be an extremely useful tool for governing bodies in establishing priorities for large projected expenditures, as well as determining how they can best be financed. At the present time, neither the city or county have a capital improvements program.

For short range planning and policy-making, financial administration can aid in accurately projecting annual revenues and expenditures, determining alternative budgets, and taking advantage of new financial management tools such as program budgeting. It would also aid in determining what additional programs might be consolidated or jointly administered between city and county to further effectuate cost savings.

3. Organization, Administration And Finance Under A Consolidated Government

The administrative function of government under a consolidated city-county would be enhanced significantly over the present structure. The largest single advantage would be the institution of high caliber professional administrative leadership at the county level, where today there is none. The advantages of a professional administrator in government were discussed previously under interlocal cooperation; briefly the advantages are: (1) an administrator can promote professionalism and efficiency throughout the government bureaucratic hierarchy, (2) an administrator can enhance the ability of elected officials to establish goals and policies for the community by providing them with facts, reports and studies, and recommendations, (3) an administrator can coordinate all government functions under his jurisdiction to promote efficiency and effectiveness of services, and (4) an administrator can promote multi-county and regional intergovernmental cooperation. In addition to these general advantages of professional full-time administration, it should be obvious that an administrator for a consolidated government would have the means to fully coordinate all government services and functions for both the rural areas and the urban service districts. Citizens would then have a single source of

contact for obtaining information or solving problems. Those citizens in the more rapidly growing fringe areas around Roxboro would not have to wonder which level of government (city or county) is responsible for a function or providing a service.

The administrative structure under a consolidated Roxboro-Person County government would be decided upon by the charter commission. In all probability, the charter commission would recommend a council-manager form of government, which is the only form currently used in North Carolina municipalities having a population of more than 25,000.

This structure would, of course, be modified somewhat to provide for those officials required by the State Constitution to be elected (Sheriff, Register of Deeds). The council (or board of commissioners) would also continue to appoint members of various boards and commissions at the county or multi-county level, as they do of various boards and commissions at the county or multi-county level, as they do presently. These would include the ABC Board, Planning Board, Recreation Commission, Board of Social Services, Person-Caswell County Lake Authority, etc.

A consolidated governmental structure would offer a good deal of leeway in terms of financial administration. Many of the recommendations proposed earlier in this report concerning financial administration under a single finance director could be readily implemented. It was mentioned earlier that total consolidation of the financial administration function of Roxboro and Person County would be difficult, if not impossible, because of legal requirements for each governing body to have a budget officer and financial officer. This would not be a problem obviously, if the city and county were to merge totally.

One implication of total merger would be the ability to manage all funds jointly, thereby potentially increasing interest revenues through more effective investments of idle funds. Of course, the other advantages of a single financial administration would also apply, i.e., the potential for more effective use of data processing, centralized purchasing, joint tax collection, more effective use of equipment such as accounting machines, and so on.

An important financial aspect of consolidation, and one which is impossible to measure, is the effect that consolidation would have on the economic growth and vitality of the community as a whole. One criterion used by industry when it is evaluating a community is the stability of local government and its ability to provide it with the municipal services it needs. It has been the experience of some consolidated units that consolidation led to increased industrial development and renewed confidence on the part of industries already located there. This would seem to be borne out by the fact that consolidation proposals have generally been supported by local chambers of commerce and other business-oriented organizations. Of course, there are no assurances that a similar effect would be felt in Roxboro-Person County, but it is something to consider.

The cost of financial administration under a consolidated government would depend largely on the exact structure, number of personnel, and duties enumerated by a charter commission. This function could be performed with the current total outlays by the city and county for financial administration. The potential savings (through purchasing investments, etc.) should ideally be considered when determining what the costs would be, although it is impossible to determine, at this time, exactly what these dollar savings would be.

Administrative and financial planning and policy-making under a consolidated government could be improved significantly over the current system. The primary reason for this is that coordinated efforts could be made to study and solve areawide problems which do not recognize city limit boundaries. Another important advantage is the separation of administrative and policy-making functions, a condition which can only come about through the hiring of a professional government manager. The advantages of having a professional administrator have been mentioned previously, but basically it means that responsibility and accountability can be pinpointed, and elected policy makers can devote their energies to that end - making policy - while the administrator determines the best way to implement that policy.

Centralization of the policy-making function would also be beneficial to the citizenry at large, particularly those living in the unincorporated urban fringe of Roxboro. These people sometimes do not know who to turn to for solving a particular problem. For example, the people in the Somerset Subdivision needed sewer service, but the county wasn't able to help them; the city also contended that it wasn't their responsibility. Under a single policy-making body, these problems could be solved rationally without trying to shift governmental responsibility from one unit to another.

Political responsibility in a consolidated government would remain in the hands of elected officials. A point to be considered is that a single elected body might be more responsive to the needs of all county residents than are two separate

elected boards. A city council, of course, represents only its constituents within the city limits. While county commissioners are responsible for the needs of all county residents, they are sometimes unable to provide nonmunicipal residents with the services they need, such as water and sewer. Cities are sometimes unwilling to annex areas which require municipal services because they will not "pay their own way," and so the problems and needs remain unresolved and unmet.

The present dual system also dilutes local leadership talent into two organizations whose interests sometimes clash. A unitary political body could avail itself of the most talented and public spirited citizens countywide, and could establish goals and priorities to benefit all county residents without regard to dysfunctional city boundaries. This is not to say there would always be unanimity within a single elected body - most certainly there would not be - but the overall goals of all members should be essentially the same, and some measure of cooperation would be mandatory. There is no such requirement for city and county elected officials to cooperate, although they frequently have done so in Roxboro and Person County.

Recommendation

The organization, administration and finance subcommittee recommends that total city-county consolidation be pursued as the best means of providing government administrative and financial services to the people of Roxboro-Person County. The subcommittee had no specific alternative recommendations to total consolidation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Local Government Modernization Study Committee tried to be as objective as possible in analyzing government organization in Roxboro and Person County, and in recommending ways of improving local government services. These recommendations were made in the spirit that the people living in Roxboro-Person County are already enjoying the fruits of good honest government, but like most other social institutions, there is always room for improvements.

Again, it should be reiterated that the committee unanimously recommends total city-county consolidation as the best means of meeting today's needs and preparing for the future in Roxboro-Person County. Should total consolidation not be pursued immediately, however, there are some alternatives open to the board of commissioners and city council to help fill the gaps until a more comprehensive reorganization can be implemented. Briefly, the alternatives recommended by the various subcommittees are as follows:

- Law Enforcement; Establishment of a countywide law enforcement agency separate and distinct from the sheriff's department.
- Fire Protection; Establishment of at least three additional volunteer fire departments in outlying areas of the county.
- Water and Sewer; Transfer of responsibility and authority for all capital improvements to the county, with the city operating and maintaining the system.
- Planning and Zoning; Creation of a joint city-county planning board, assisted by a single administrative staff.
- Organization, Administration and Finance; No alternative to total consolidation specifically recommended.

These alternatives will not solve all the problems discussed by functional area, but they should help to meet some of the city and county needs.

Local government in North Carolina, as in other parts of the country, has evolved from a simplistic part-time operation to an expensive complex undertaking. As needs become more complex, the capacity of local government to meet them must become more sophisticated to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively. The study committee believes that Roxboro and Person County are up to this challenge.

